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## **Staton's Voter ID bill makes it easier to vote**

**ATLANTA** – Senate Bill 84, authored by State Sen. Cecil Staton (R-Macon), passed the Senate today making it easier for Georgians to obtain a state issued photo ID so they can legally vote.



In a 32-22 vote today on the Senate floor, the legislation cleans up a law passed last year requiring Georgians to show one of six approved forms of identification – including a driver's license, military ID or passport.

The new legislation allows any Georgian who does not have any of the approved IDs to obtain one, free of charge from any of more than 200 outlets throughout the state – including at least one in each county. The bill stipulates that every county board of elections have the necessary equipment to make photo IDs as well as more than 50 Department of Driver's Services offices across the state.

“We have effectively dealt with the Court's concerns,” Sen. Staton said referring to 11<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court Judge Harold Murphy's ruling last year that struck down the original law saying it was unfair to poor and elderly voters – equating it to a “poll” tax. “We are going to educate Georgia voters as to the new law and we are providing free access to a photo ID for every eligible voter.

“Now that we've met the Judge's concerns, it will be interesting to see what the special interest groups come up with now,” he added, following the lengthy floor debate that lasted for more than four hours.

“This is about the future,” Staton continued, noting that the whole reason he wrote the original legislation was to prevent voter fraud. “I want to insure the integrity of the election process. I want to make sure that the one person, one vote remains isn’t abused. A lot of people fought and died for the right to vote and I intend to see that we do everything in our power to ensure that their vote is legally cast and their vote will count. That’s what this is all about.”

The legislation, which was amended by the Senate, returns to the House of Representatives for agreement.

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*Sen. Cecil Staton of the 18<sup>th</sup> Senate district may be reached at 404.656.5039. He represents portions of Bibb, Crawford, Houston, Jones and Monroe counties.*